

May 18, 2017

The Honorable Jim Frazier  
California State Assembly  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Assembly Bill 732 (Delta Levees Subvention Program)

Dear Assemblyman Frazier:

The Delta Protection Commission supports Assembly Bill 732 (as amended March 23, 2017) to permanently extend the current maximum 75% State reimbursement under the Delta Levees Subvention Program (Program) by removing the July 1, 2018 sunset date.

As you know, the cost share provisions of the Program under the existing 75%-25% state-local split have led to substantial Delta levee improvements over the past several decades that have been extremely successful in reducing the number and frequency of levee failures. The improved level of flood protection is a benefit to local Delta interests as well as beneficiaries outside the Delta region, including valuable regional infrastructure that passes through the Delta and the extensive Delta water exports that rely upon Delta levee system integrity.

We support AB 732 because we are concerned that allowing the State's maximum reimbursement level to revert to 50% would reduce the ability of many reclamation districts to continue participating in the levee maintenance program, and therefore would threaten recent gains in reducing Delta flood risks.

Our support of AB 732 is also consistent with the Delta Protection Commission's Vision 2030 Strategic Plan (adopted May 21, 2015) which calls for permanent status for up to 75% State reimbursement and other Delta-supported improvements to the Delta Levees Subventions and Special Projects Programs. The Commission has found that "modifying this (levees subventions) program in a way that would deprive rural levee maintaining agencies of funding would be a disservice to Delta as Place and the important values in the primary zone (of the Delta)."

Thank you for your dedication to protecting Delta's resources - true California treasures, which are almost entirely dependent on the State's continued fiscal commitment to fund a well-maintained, reliable levee system.

Sincerely,

Skip Thomson  
Chair

Cc: Members of the California Legislature representing Delta districts